

YAVUZ GALLERY | PRESS RELEASE | 26 OCT 2022

Khairullah Rahim

Kilau Merbuk Batu (The Luster of Rock Doves)

Exhibition dates: 19 November to 11 December 2022

Location: 9 Lock Road, #02-23, Gillman Barracks, Singapore 108937

Yavuz Gallery is pleased to present *Kilau Merbuk Batu*, Khairullah Rahim's third solo exhibition with the gallery.

The exhibition brings together recent works by Khairullah that inspects the politics of visibility and surveillance, specifically in considering the intertwining relationships between objects, bodies, and community as a point of divergence. These new media works were developed as part of his ongoing research which intimately examines the lived experiences of the community in Boon Lay, Singapore, where a large fraction of its residents are predominantly of the working-class demographic.

The precinct is also known for reporting higher numbers in organised crime activities. In it, surveillance is glaringly heightened and the boundaries between safety, privacy and autonomy are often blurred. Singapore is often rendered as an aspiring techno-utopia along with a global reputation as one of the safest cities in the world. While many associate the increased efforts of vigilance in the form of; CCTV cameras, aerial drone cameras, blimps, artificially-intelligent robot dogs, "smart" lamp posts and Bluetooth contact-tracing with notions of safety and security, others are wary. His research challenges this very notion of hyper-visibility by re-chronicling these structures by means of repelling and shielding as they become diversionary tactics instead of disclosing and exposing.

The title of the presentation, *Kilau Merbuk Batu*, inspired by the vocalisation of rock doves, is a metaphor responding to the frequent mass extermination of pigeons that take place in broad daylight within the neighbourhood. These birds are often vilified as persistent contagious disease carriers; thus, resulting in its copulation being constantly monitored and policed.

There are uncanny parallels between the perceptions of pigeons and orthodox representations of marginalised identities, these subjects are constantly navigating and code-switching in between guilt, shame and desire under surveillance in a confrontational environment. The extravagant and maximalist nature of Khairullah's videos are unassumingly tactical, bringing attention to garish beauty while they simultaneously act as decoys, masking archetypal connotations of security, desirability and identity.

ABOUT THE ARTIST

Khairullah Rahim is a Singapore-based artist working across mixed-media installation, object-making, painting, photography and moving image. His explorations delve into complex strategies of resourcefulness for everyday survival in environments under constant surveillance. Through various means of collaboration and critical thinking, his practice considers mindful ways of shedding light onto the veiled narratives of his community while emphasising the often-neglected need for opacity. Materially, he continues to experiment extensively with the sheen, reflection and refraction of synthetic polymers; most evidently through rhinestones. Recurring points of departure in his work premise around themes of queerness, desire, shame, resistance, aspiration, labour and ethics of disclosure.

Khairullah's works have been showcased in solo and group presentations at venues including the Barbican Centre (London), Centre for Contemporary Arts (Glasgow), Tiger Strikes Asteroid (New York), Bangkok Art and Culture Centre (Bangkok) and National Gallery Singapore amongst others. He has participated in artist residency programs, namely with Salzburger Kunstverein (Austria), Facebook (Singapore), Hubei Institute of Fine Arts (China), Taipei Artist Village (Taiwan) and YOUKOBORO Art Residency Programme (Japan). In 2019, his work was included in the 6th edition of Singapore Biennale led by Patrick Flores. Khairullah was the winner of the 2017 IMPART Awards for Visual Artist category. His works are in the collection of Singapore Art Museum and SUNPRIDE Foundation. Currently, he is an adjunct lecturer at his alma mater, LASALLE College of the Arts, Singapore and an MFA Visual Arts candidate at Rutgers University, New Jersey.

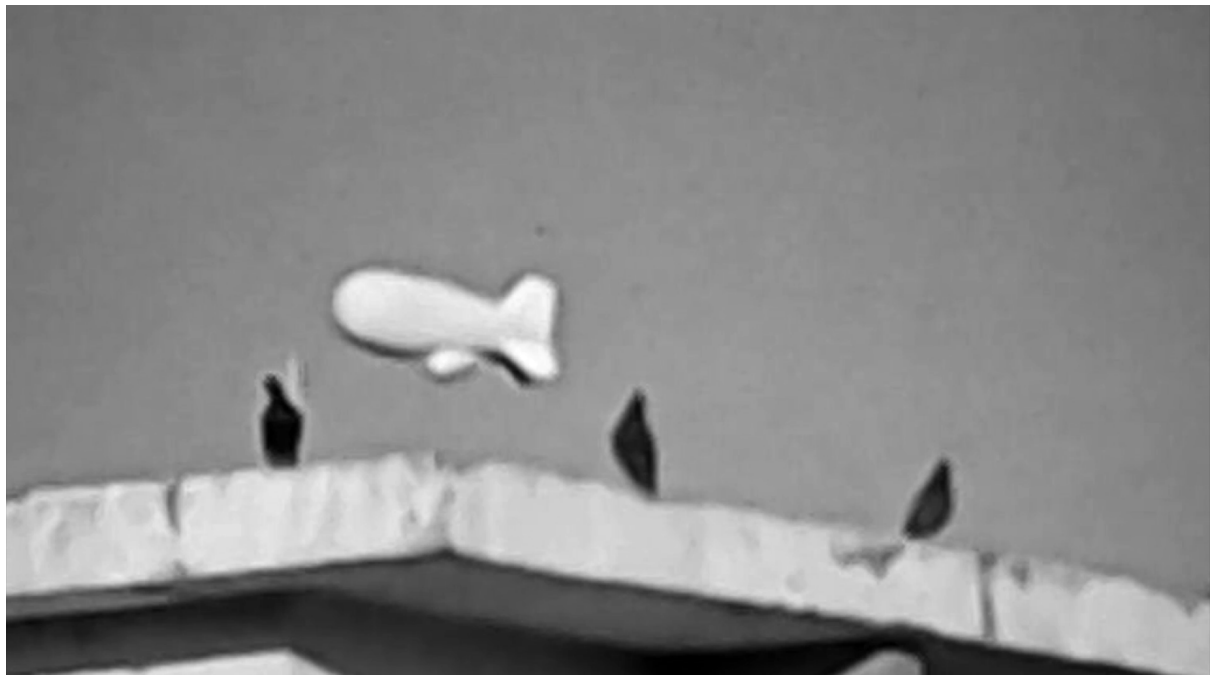
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SELECTED WORKS



Shapeshifter(s), still, 2021, single-channel digital short film with audio on loop, 02:40, 16:9 aspect ratio, edition of 3 + 1 AP



Sunday, still, 2022, single-channel digital short film with audio on loop, 03:57, 4:3 aspect ratio, edition of 3 + 1 AP

For further information on the artist and the works, please contact:

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